



CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS, AUSTRALIA, JUNE 1980 (PRELIMINARY)

INQUIRIES

If you want to know more about these statistics ring Mr C. Pickerd, Canberra (062) 526751 or our State Office, or write to Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616

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MAIN FEATURES

In June 1980 there were 1,128,000 children under twelve not attending school of whom 421,600 were exclusively cared for by the family person responsible for the child (usually the mother); 408,900 were cared for at some time mainly by the spouse of the responsible person, older children in the family and/or relatives; 91,900 mainly by other persons and/or organisations and 203,100 mainly by attending either pre-school or child care centres.

There were 1,165,400 families with children under twelve attending school. 860,600 families organised their main type of care outside school hours within the family. 236,800 families utilised other persons or organisations for their main type of care; 15,000 families utilised formal care facilities as their main type of care while some 52,900 families reported that their main type of care was to leave the children by themselves.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

A survey was conducted throughout Australia in June 1980 to obtain information on child care arrangements made by persons who were responsible for children under twelve years of age. Information obtained included marital and employment status of the person responsible, types and multiplicity of care (including after school care), cost and hours of care, the age and number of children receiving care, family types and income.

2. This publication contains preliminary estimates of the main aspects of the survey. More detailed estimates will be published at a later date. The estimates are subject to revision.

Scope and coverage

3. The survey was conducted as part of the regular population survey which is based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 30,000 houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.) and covers about two-thirds of one per cent of the

population of Australia. Certain groups of persons such as occupants of non-private dwellings (e.g. hospitals, hotels, etc.) diplomatic personnel and persons from overseas touring or holidaying in Australia were excluded from the survey.

Survey method

4. The information about child care was obtained through carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers from the person responsible for children under twelve years of age (see paragraph 5). If the person responsible for children under twelve years of age was not available for interview another responsible adult answered on his or her behalf. Interviews were carried out over a period of two weeks commencing 9 June 1980.

Definitions

5. The *person responsible* for children under twelve years of age was taken to be the mother if she normally resided at that private dwelling. If the mother was not normally resident at that private dwelling then the information was sought from the person who was mainly responsible for the children under twelve years of age.

6. A *family unit* for the purposes of this survey was defined as a unit containing children under twelve years of age and a person responsible for those children (together with that person's spouse and older children resident in the dwelling). Throughout this publication, spouse refers to the spouse of the person responsible for the children within a *family unit*.

7. *Child care* relates to all arrangements made for children under twelve years of age for all times Monday to Friday of the week before interview when the children were not in the care of the person responsible.

(a) *Formal care* relates to arrangements made for the care of children at a pre-school or at a centre such as a creche, playgroup, kindergarten or occasional care centre.

(b) *Informal care* includes any care arrangement where children were cared for by the spouse of

the person responsible, older children (that is, children aged 12 to 17 years in that dwelling), or other relative of the person responsible for the children, or by another person.

8. *Main type of care* is the designated care arrangement (other than care by the person responsible) utilising the most number of hours.

9. *Cost of care* is money paid directly for care other than care by either spouse or older children.

10. *Income group* refers to the range applicable to the combined gross weekly income of the person responsible for the children and that person's spouse (if any).

Collection methodology

11. For children not at school, details of child care arrangements were collected for the eldest three children individually but not in respect of any other children not at school (only a very small number of families have four or more children less than twelve years of age not at school). Cost information was obtained in respect of all children not at school, collectively.

12. For children at school, details of child care arrangements were not collected individually for each child but for all children under twelve years of age at school collectively. Thus the number of hours of care is the sum of the number of hours all children spent in each particular care type. Similarly, cost information was only obtained in respect of all children.

Interpretation of results

13. As data was collected individually for each child not at school and collectively for all children at school, the data in the tables have been presented separately for the two groups. The statistical unit for type of care is *the child* for children not attending school and the *family unit* for children attending school. For cost of child care, the statistical unit is the family unit. No attempt has been made to examine the child care arrangements for all the children in a family unit together (e.g. total cost for children at school and children not at school).

Reliability of the estimates

14. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability, that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included in the survey. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than

two standard errors. Another measure of the likely difference is the relative standard error, which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate.

15. The table below shows estimated standard errors and standard error percentages for numbers of family units with children under twelve years of age and numbers of children. Thus, an estimate of 5,000 family units has a standard error of 1,000 family units or 20.0 per cent. This means there are about two chances in three that the true figure is within the range 4,000 to 6,000 and about nineteen chances in twenty that this figure is between 3,000 and 7,000.

16. Estimates with relative standard errors greater than 30 per cent have not been shown and although figures for these components can in some cases be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable.

STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES –
FAMILY UNITS AND CHILDREN

Size of estimates (family units/children)	Family units		Children	
	Approximate standard error (family units)	Relative standard error (per cent)	Approximate standard error (children)	Relative standard error (per cent)
2,300	694	30.0	..	..
2,500	730	29.0	..	..
3,000	790	26.5	..	..
3,500	860	24.6	1,070	30.7
4,000	920	23.0	1,140	28.6
4,500	970	21.6	1,240	27.5
5,000	1,000	20.0	1,290	25.7
6,000	1,100	18.0	1,400	23.4
10,000	1,400	14.0	1,800	18.0
20,000	2,000	10.0	2,500	12.5
50,000	2,900	5.8	3,800	7.6
100,000	3,900	3.9	5,000	5.0
200,000	5,100	2.6	7,000	3.5
300,000	6,000	2.0	7,800	2.6
500,000	7,200	1.4	9,500	1.9
1,000,000	9,100	0.9	12,000	1.2
2,000,000	11,000	0.6	16,000	0.8

17. The imprecision due to sampling variability should not be confused with inaccuracies that may have occurred because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as the non-sampling error, and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or only a sample.

Related publications

18. Users may wish to refer to the following related publications which are available on request:

Child Care, May 1977 (4402.0)

1976 Census Information Paper: Child Minding (2117.0)

19. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia*

20. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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[illegible]

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF FAMILY UNITS CLASSIFIED BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN AT SCHOOL AND NOT AT SCHOOL, AUSTRALIA, 1980

Number of children not attending school	Number of children under 12 years of age attending school				
	None	One	Two	Three or more	Total
Number of family units ('000)					
None	..	412.7	283.7	73.8	770.3
One	276.2	194.0	92.2	20.2	582.7
Two	151.8	56.1	19.6	5.6	233.1
Three or more	19.0	4.9	*	*	26.4
Total	447.1	667.8	397.0	100.6	1,612.5

TABLE 2. TOTAL USE OF CARE (a) : CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL BY TYPE OF CARE, AUSTRALIA, 1980

Type of care	Number of hours of child care per week for each type of care						Total
	Less than 5	5 to less than 10	10 to less than 20	20 to less than 30	30 to less than 40	40 or more	
Number of children ('000)							
Informal care –							
Spouse of the person responsible	261.4	69.0	30.1	9.2	6.0	7.5	383.3
Older children (b)	10.0	*	*	*	*	*	15.0
Other relatives	122.5	52.8	26.9	15.2	10.8	19.3	247.5
Other persons	75.0	34.7	17.7	7.3	8.5	14.4	157.6
Formal care –							
Pre-school	15.4	47.6	93.8	3.7	5.8	*	168.7
Care at centre (c)	32.9	18.1	20.5	5.6	5.4	8.0	90.5
By themselves	4.0	*	*	*	*	*	5.3
Other (d)	5.0	*	*	*	*	*	10.2

(a) The data in this table refer to all types of care arranged for children in the reference week and any child may be counted in several care types. No attempt has, therefore, been made to total the columns across categories of care types as this would result in the number of events of child care and not the number of children, and direct comparison of such totals with those published in Table 3 (below) would be invalid. (b) Children in the dwelling 12-17 years of age. (c) Includes creche, playgroup, kindergarten, occasional care centre, etc. (d) Includes scouts, guides, music lessons, organised sporting activities, etc.

TABLE 3. MAIN USE OF CARE (a) : CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL BY TYPE OF CARE, AUSTRALIA, 1980

Main type of care	Number of hours of main type of care per week						Care by person responsible only	Total
	Less than 5	5 to less than 10	10 to less than 20	20 to less than 30	30 to less than 40	40 or more		
Number of children ('000)								
Informal care –								
Spouse of the person responsible	148.2	41.1	22.2	8.7	5.6	7.4	..	233.3
Older children (b)	3.6	*	*	*	*	*	..	6.4
Other relatives	69.3	36.7	20.4	13.5	10.7	18.6	..	169.2
Other persons	24.7	19.4	13.4	7.1	8.5	14.0	..	87.1
Total	245.8	98.9	56.9	29.5	24.7	40.1	..	496.0
Formal care –								
Pre-school	8.9	35.9	83.8	3.7	5.7	*	..	140.5
Care at centre (c)	11.7	13.9	18.7	5.4	5.1	7.8	..	62.5
Total	20.6	49.8	102.5	9.1	10.8	10.2	..	203.1
By themselves	*	*	*	*	*	*	..	*
Other (d)	*	*	*	*	*	*	..	4.8
Care by person responsible only	..	..	..	..	..	..	421.6	421.6
Total	268.2	149.7	161.3	39.6	36.2	51.3	421.6	1,128.0

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 8, for definition of main type of care. (b) Children in the dwelling 12-17 years of age. (c) Includes creche, playgroup, kindergarten, occasional care centre, etc. (d) Includes scouts, guides, music lessons, organised sporting activities, etc.

TABLE 4. TOTAL USE OF CARE (a) : FAMILY UNITS WITH SCHOOL CHILDREN BY TYPE OF CARE, AUSTRALIA, 1980

Type of care	Number of hours of care per week for each type of care						Total
	Less than 5	5 to less than 10	10 to less than 20	20 to less than 30	30 to less than 40	40 or more	
Number of family units ('000)							
Informal care –							
Spouse of the person responsible	158.5	67.6	38.8	14.8	6.6	11.3	297.6
Older children (b)	52.1	30.9	13.6	2.4	*	*	100.6
Other relatives	45.6	33.2	27.6	6.8	2.9	4.5	120.7
Other persons	110.0	43.0	28.8	6.8	*	*	191.8
Formal care –							
Care at centre (c)	14.0	5.3	4.6	*	*	*	26.1
By themselves	66.8	21.4	10.0	*	*	*	100.0
Other (d)	173.1	31.6	6.6	*	*	*	215.4

(a) The data in this table refer to all types of care arrangements made for the children at school in the family unit in the reference week and any family unit may be counted in several care types. No attempt has, therefore, been made to total the columns across categories of care types as this would result in the number of times care arrangements were utilised and not the number of family units. Direct comparison of such total with those published in Table 5 (below) would be invalid. (b) Children in the dwelling 12-17 years of age. (c) Includes creche, playgroup, kindergarten, occasional care centre, etc. (d) Includes scouts, guides, music lessons, organised sporting activities, etc.

TABLE 5. MAIN USE OF CARE (a) : FAMILY UNITS WITH SCHOOL CHILDREN BY TYPE OF CARE, AUSTRALIA, 1980

Main type of care	Number of hours of main type of care per week						Care by person responsible only	Total
	Less than 5	5 to less than 10	10 to less than 20	20 to less than 30	30 to less than 40	40 or more		
Number of family units ('000)								
Informal care –								
Spouse of the person responsible	106.9	55.6	36.6	14.1	6.6	11.3	..	231.0
Older children (b)	27.1	23.0	12.0	*	*	*	..	65.3
Other relatives	24.9	26.8	25.4	6.6	2.4	4.2	..	90.3
Other persons	59.1	34.5	25.2	6.0	*	*	..	127.4
Total	217.9	139.9	99.1	28.9	11.7	16.6	..	514.9
Formal care –								
Care at centre (c)	6.0	3.7	3.5	*	*	*	..	15.0
By themselves	27.4	15.2	8.7	*	*	*	..	52.9
Other (d)	81.3	19.9	5.0	*	*	*	..	109.4
Care by person responsible only	..	..	..	..	..	..	474.0	474.0
Total	332.7	178.7	116.3	32.2	13.8	17.7	474.0	1,165.4

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 8, for definition of main type of care. (b) Children in the dwelling 12-17 years of age. (c) Includes creche, playgroup, kindergarten, occasional care centre etc. (d) Includes scouts, guides, music lessons, organised sporting activities, etc.

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TABLE 6. WEEKLY COST OF CARE FOR CHILDREN NOT AT SCHOOL BY INCOME GROUPS (a), AUSTRALIA, 1980

Cost of care per week for all types of care (\$) (b)						
Income group (\$)	Nil	1 to 4	5 to 14	15 to 44	45 or more	Total
Number of family units ('000)						
Less than 80	11.4	*	*	*	*	15.5
80-119	11.9	4.5	*	*	*	19.9
120-159	12.3	6.1	2.4	*	*	23.0
160-199	20.4	14.1	4.5	2.7	*	42.3
200-239	37.3	19.9	7.4	4.2	*	69.3
240-299	41.0	21.0	11.9	7.5	*	82.2
300 or more	55.0	30.5	29.8	43.9	5.1	164.4
Not stated	13.5	7.4	3.2	*	*	25.5
Total	(c)202.8	105.4	62.5	63.7	7.7	(c)442.1

(a) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 10, for definition of income group. (b) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 9, for definition of cost of care. (c) Does not include 400,100 family units with children not at school which used only care by spouse or older children, or those family units where the children were cared for exclusively by the person responsible.

TABLE 7. WEEKLY COST OF CARE FOR CHILDREN AT SCHOOL BY INCOME GROUPS (a), AUSTRALIA, 1980

Cost of care per week for all types of care (\$) (b)						
Income group (\$)	Nil	1 to 4	5 to 14	15 to 44	45 or more	Total
Number of family units ('000)						
Less than 80	7.2	*	*	*	*	8.6
80-119	19.5	3.6	*	*	*	24.5
120-159	16.3	4.6	*	*	*	23.4
160-199	28.6	8.0	*	*	*	38.7
200-239	39.2	11.6	4.4	2.3	*	57.7
240-299	53.4	17.1	6.2	*	*	78.4
300 or more	119.3	41.0	24.4	10.7	*	196.4
Not stated	25.6	6.7	3.3	*	*	37.2
Total	(c)309.0	94.1	41.4	19.1	*	(c)465.1

(a) See Explanatory Notes paragraph 10, for definition of income group. (b) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 9, for definition of cost of care. (c) Does not include 700,500 family units with children at school which used only care by spouse or older children, or those family units where the children were cared for exclusively by the person responsible at all relevant times during the reference week.